A VISION FOR CULTURAL INDUSTRIES –

A CONSULTATION REPORT

Yukon
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Implementation Plan

In 1988, as part of the Yukon government's Yukon 2000 initiative, discussions took place concerning cultural industries in the territory. There were two main issues that came forward at that time. People involved in cultural industries wanted an Arts Branch within the government. They also wanted an Arts Policy that would set out guidelines for government support of the arts and would outline how the arts can best use existing resources.

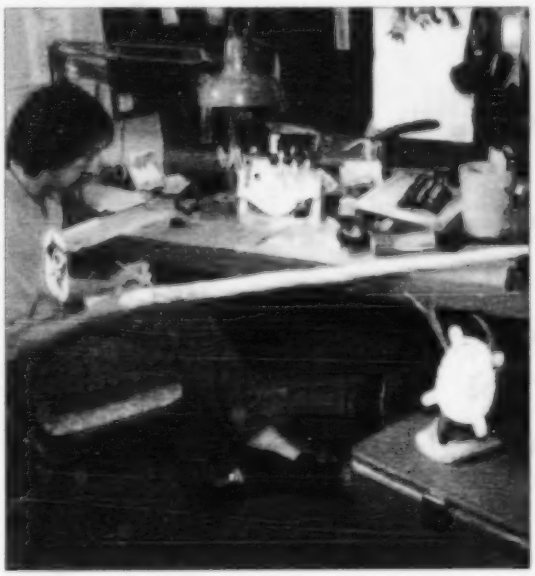
Both of these came to fruition — the Arts Branch in 1992 and the Yukon Arts Policy in 1997. While the Arts Policy provides a support framework for non-commercial art, the government recognized a need to further address the "for-profit" components of Yukon art. It set up a series of consultations with the Yukon's seven commercial cultural industries —film production, video production, book and periodical production, visual arts, sound recording, new media and the commercial activities of cultural non-governmental organizations.

The purpose of the consultations was to learn more about the state of the Yukon's cultural industries and what role government should play in supporting "for-profit" arts and culture.

This cultural industries implementation plan is the result of these consultations. It is intended to solicit the opinions of those who were involved in the cultural industries consultations and others involved in the arts. The first part of this report contains information about the current state of each of the Yukon's cultural industries, their strengths and challenges. The second part deals with the Yukon government's plan to help the industries reach their potential in this rapidly changing world.

This multi-year development plan is the first of several the government is committed to creating for the territory's emerging economic sectors.

The Yukon government would like to thank the many people who took part in the consultations. Your views and insights have been valuable in guiding the government in its work.



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Overview

As we approach the 21st century, countries around the world are grappling with the question of how to maintain and strengthen their cultural identities in an increasingly globalized world. With the advent of the information age and freer trade, "global culture" has spread worldwide. This is creating both opportunities and challenges for our cultural industries.

The information age has also changed the very definition of cultural industries. Here in the Yukon, as elsewhere, the traditional perception that the industry has had marginal economic impact is being challenged by the rapid growth of music recording, publishing, new media production and television and film production. Cultural products are key in emerging markets such as home entertainment, the Internet and the 500-channel television universe. Culture is increasingly becoming big business. At the same time, new technologies are allowing small businesses and individual artists to participate in the global market.

Barriers that may have existed in the past for Yukon artists are being torn down. For instance, geographic proximity to markets is no longer as significant an issue for industries based on communications technology such as music recording or new media production.

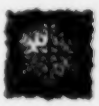
It's significant to note that new cultural industry ventures in the Yukon have evolved in a fully competitive market, without any large degree of public policy or funding. This is true not only of local projects, but also of those that compete in national markets where ventures are supported by provincial government programs. This has led to the suggestion that cultural industry ventures would be even more successful if the Yukon were able to access Economic Development Agreement (EDA) funds to the degree available in the provinces.

Healthy cultural industries will help create jobs and diversify the territory's economy. Thriving cultural sectors bring social and esthetic benefits as well as economic ones. Art and culture provide people with a sense of self-esteem, pride of place and general well-being that goes a long way towards creating and maintaining healthy vibrant communities. They provide youth with an avenue to channel their creative energies and in some cases give them experience and exposure that enable them to enter the labour market.

For all the advances that have been made in developing and sustaining arts and culture in the Yukon, there remain many challenges. Access to commercial and venture capital is often difficult. As well, there's a need for training at all levels in cultural industries, in everything from basic bookkeeping skills to retailing to marketing.

Industry representatives say there's a particular need to establish more places to sell First Nations art. With a few exceptions, First Nations artists don't have access to local or global markets. This is a lost opportunity for community-based economic growth and the strengthening and preservation of First Nations culture.

This document outlines a plan that will take the Yukon into the new millennium, the overall goal being to sustain vibrant and competitive cultural sectors in the territory. Industry, institutions and individuals have a large role to play in this development. It's hoped that by working together and by taking advantage of ever increasing economic opportunities, the Yukon's cultural sectors will flourish.



Film Production

*In 1998, **Carol Geddes** was nominated for a Gemini award in the best documentary category for her film "Picturing a People: George Johnston, Tlingit Photographer."*

In May, the Department of Tourism sponsored a training course at Yukon College to help people learn the skills of being a Production Assistant — the most common position on a film crew. Instructors from the Vancouver Film Institute taught the course to 25 local people. Immediately following the course, a Quebec production company hired about half of the participants for a location shoot in Haines Junction.

*In 1995, CBC Television produced a screenplay by **Serena Mis. Ta-Nash** entitled "Flat Mountain Taxtales." It was part of CBC's "Four Directions" series, an anthology by and about Canadian First Nations people. Flat Mountain Taxtales was filmed in Haines Junction. It featured local actors **Danelle Ward** and **Joe Migwans**.*

The film industry in the Yukon has grown greatly in the time since the public consultations. In 1997, there were only two local film companies. Today there are at least seven and some of the people who run the production firms are now able to earn their incomes solely from employment in the industry. The latest figures (1997) indicate film production generates at least $3 million annually and employs more than 50 local people as technicians, producers, production assistants, grips, script writers and camera operators.

The number of local people who have film production experience has also grown. Producers — both local and visiting — can now draw members of their crew from a pool of about approximately 50 Yukon people. It's possible, with a few exceptions, to provide most of a crew for a television movie, documentary or commercial production with experienced local talent. This is a big step forward. Until recently, a producer had to bring crew in from elsewhere, resulting in additional costs in transportation, accommodation and per diems. With every position that can be filled locally, the Yukon becomes more attractive to producers.

In spite of the increased number of local film companies, most of the economic impact from the Yukon's film industry continues to be from outside production firms. In 1998, foreign companies shot three commercials in the territory and about a dozen documentaries. That compares with just a few productions done by local firms and individuals.

While outside film companies may recognize the advantages of working in the Yukon — long hours of daylight in summer, snow for much of the year, beautiful scenery — competition is fierce for attracting those firms to the territory. There are almost 300 member commissions in the Association of Film Commissioners International and many of them can be considered direct competitors with the Yukon. Many governments have large budgets that are used as incentives to production companies, particularly in the influential scouting phase. Many film commissions offer "all expenses paid" location scouts for production executives.

Recognizing the need to create a more level playing field here in the territory, the Yukon government recently announced a Yukon Film Incentive Program. It provides travel rebates and rebates for wages paid for Yukon labour. These incentives combined with the lower Canadian dollar and the Yukon's spectacular scenery are bringing more foreign producers to the territory.

Recommendations from the film production industry

- **Support training in key areas of the industry.**
- **Provide tax breaks and other incentives for potential outside companies to invest in Yukon film projects.**
- **Support infrastructure development.**

Video Production

*Gemini winning videographer/filmmaker **Allan Code** has completed a music video of **Jerry Alfred and the Medicine Beat**.*

*In 1985, **NEDAA** became the first studio to do public broadcasting. **Northern Native Broadcasting Yukon** (NNBY) started broadcasting in 1988. It's developing a pilot for a television series called "Yukon Extreme", the first of which will feature three Yukon adventure operators. It will be aired on the new aboriginal network and other specialty channels.*

***NMI Mobility** is developing five videos to promote "Thunder on Ice," one of the Yukon's newest winter events.*

This year nine people —- the largest Yukon film and TV contingent ever— attended the Banff Television Festival.

Like film production, work in video is relatively new in the Yukon. It didn't start until the late 70s and early 80s. Today, there are several established video producers in the Yukon and two television production studios, CBC North and NEDAA. The most recent figures (1997) indicate the video production industry has a total gross revenue of between $1 and $2 million per year and employs about 40 people.

Traditionally much of the production work has been in the creation of industrial or commercial video used to promote tourism or other business. However with the explosion of new media such as the Internet, the market for industrial/ commercial video is fading. Some clients argue it's cheaper to sell a product or service over the Internet and it's possible to reach a larger audience.

One influencing factor in the health of the video industry is the overall economy of the Yukon. Promotional and advertising budgets tend to be among the first things to be cut in tough economic times.

An area where there is great potential is in the broadcasting sector of the industry. What the Yukon has to offer is remarkable: natural landscapes, wildlife and northern culture. With the coming of the 500 channel universe and the launching of a First Nations national TV channel called the "Aboriginal People's Television Network," there are growing opportunities for Yukon video production. There is also potential for exporting programming ideas, serving as a location for a series (similar to North of 60), or telling Yukon stories through a locally produced TV series.

The trend in the industry, however, is to pay less and expect a better product. Technical standards and expectations are increasing in the industry and driving up capital costs to producers. The video production industry is highly competitive and work within the Yukon tends to go to known outside producers, in spite of the fact that local video artists have the skills and technology to meet the needs of national and international markets. Because the market in the Yukon is small, producers must have access to other markets to survive in the future.

Funding is also an issue. While the federal government provides some financial help for First Nations' television programming, the purse strings have tightened in recent years.

Yukon government programs such as the Tourism Marketing Fund, the Trade and Investment Fund and the Yukon Filmmakers Fund have proved to be a boost to the video industry.

Recommendations from video production industry

- **Help industry representatives to access outside markets by enabling them to attend industry events.**
- **Sponsor workshops for local producers in marketing and accessing global markets.**
- **Support an annual film festival to provide a venue for local producers to show their work.**
- **Investigate alternate means of support, including a loan program, to provide project financing.**

Sound Recording

Jerry Alfred and the Medicine Beat *received a Juno Award for "Etsi Shon" in 1996. Jerry Alfred was also nominated for three awards at the Second Annual Native American Music Awards — Artist of the Year, Best Male Artist and Best Aboriginal Canadian Contemporary Recording.*

Matthew Lien *is enjoying phenomenal success in Taiwan and has performed at the Taiwan Music Awards. He premiered his sixth album in Taiwan for Earth Day in April, 2000.*

In the late 1970s, ***CBC North*** *produced some of the first records by Yukon artists, including* ***Manfred Janssen*** *and* ***Jim Vautour*** *(collectively known as* ***Two Rivers****) and* ***Gary Averil.*** *Janssen released his first solo CD, "Familiar Ground," in November, 1999.*

The band ***Inconnu*** *released their latest CD, "Back to the Water," in 1998.*

The ***Peters Drury Trio*** *released their first CD, "When Old Met New," in October, 1999. They have sold over 1,000 units — a rare accomplishment in Canadian jazz circles.*

Music Canada 2000 commissioned a major piece from ***Daniel Janke*** *to premiere the National Millennium Music series in Whitehorse. Janke's Longest Night Society launched its own CD, "Not too Dark," the same evening.*

In 1998, ***Kim Rogers*** *released her first CD, "Canyon City." In 1999,* ***Kim Barlow*** *released her new CD, "Humminah," to rave reviews and a successful tour in B.C.*

Children's entertainer ***Michael Brooks*** *released a CD, "Trail of '98," in 1998.*

Upcoming releases include works by ***Barb Chamberlin****,* ***Marty Waldman****,* ***Kendall Sullivan & Joe Bishop*** *and* ***Susie Ross****.*

John Steins *and* ***Scott Sheerin*** *worked with Canadian musicians David Essig and Daniel Lanoie in the early 1980s to produce "Midnight Sun."*

In the last decade, Yukon musicians have produced close to 40 CDs — more per capita than anywhere else in Canada. It is estimated that one out of every 100 Yukoners is involved in some way in the production of a CD or cassette.

Sound recording is one of the big success stories in terms of the Yukon's cultural industries. Musicians are now artistically and technically capable of producing unique northern products that are in increasing demand within global markets.

The Yukon's success in sound recording is due, in part, to global changes in the industry. In recent years, the smaller independent CD producers have grown, making it easier for Yukon recording artists to sign with labels. Along with that, technology is available and recording can now be done without leaving the territory.

The Yukon's music festivals can take some of the credit for the thriving local music scene. Frostbite and the Dawson City Music Festival have for years given artists exposure and opportunities to work with and learn from experienced outside performers.

The growing interest in Yukon music within Canada has also come about because of CD projects such as the CBC's Another Day in Paradise, which allowed a producer to travel to the Yukon and oversee a recording project featuring Yukon musicians. The recording has been used to acquaint national radio audiences with Yukon music. A second locally produced compilation followed called The Yukon Collection. It too received national attention. It became clear that the Yukon could offer something fresh, artistic and, because of our isolation, exotic.

Because of the growth in local sound recording studios in recent years, we can produce truly Yukon-made full-scale recordings with all but the actual pressing done here. Local companies offer music production, sound engineering, artist management, tour management, co-ordination and marketing services. This can translate into national and international markets not only for the actual recording but also for royalties and licensing rights. Currently at least 20 CDs are being exported to markets in Canada and abroad and others have export potential.

The fact that so many Yukon artists have reached the stage of CD production led to the creation in 1997 of the Recording Arts Industry Yukon Association (RAIYA). The cultural industries consultation also played a big role in RAIYA's formation. As people in the music industry came together to

discuss their needs, they began to realize how important it was to have a recording industry association. Through a partnership with the Yukon's Department of Economic Development, RAIYA is helping to set in motion a worldwide musical explosion of local recording artists. With Trade and Investment Fund funding, RAIYA sent representatives to recording industry trade missions in 1999 and 2000 to drum up export opportunities for local talent. Those trips were highly successful and resulted in new licensing deals and further exposure for Yukon artists.

Locally, there appears to be strong support for Yukon CDs. One producer estimates that about 3,000 people buy locally produced CDs each year.

Overall, the latest figures from 1997 show the sound recording industry generates almost $1 million annually and employs about 50 people.

In spite of its success, the sound recording industry faces some challenges. Financing is a critical issue for a number of musicians. Strong product development and marketing require significant capital. It's often difficult for artists to access loans from commercial lenders. Grants and loans from the Canada Council or the national sound recording funding program (FACTOR and MusicAction) have been hard to get, particularly for Yukon musicians without completed CD projects, though that is changing now that RAIYA is part of the FACTOR National Advisory Board.

Compared with other jurisdictions, distribution of CDs has traditionally been more difficult from the Yukon because of our distance from major markets. The industry is working to establish better contacts with outside agencies to distribute and market Yukon recordings. Direct Internet marketing, using MP$_3$ and RealPlayer, has changed this.

The industry still needs more business and marketing skills training opportunities.

Recommendations from the sound recording industry

- **Provide training opportunities for artists, producers and artist managers.**
- **Support networking at national and international forums.**
- **Investigate the potential for incentive subsidies to encourage outside investment in local recording studios and projects.**
- **Provide support for recording projects, including export product marketing and inbound studio recording.**

New Media Production

New Media companies in the Yukon are currently doing work in Los Angeles, Chicago, British Columbia, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Alaska and Britain.

*In 1995, **Hyperborean Production** created the North's first interactive educational game, called "Klondike Gold." The project employed about 60 people locally. A highly respected organization in the United States, the National Educational Media Network, gave "Klondike Gold" special recognition for being an outstanding product. Of the 16,000 CD ROMs published that year, only 44 were given such recognition.*

New media is a term that includes CD ROM production, interactive media, web-site design and computer software production. Although it's a technical industry, it's also arts focussed. Its success is based not on the technology but on the creativity of people designing and using the materials. It requires a melding of many artistic disciplines — film, video, sound recording, animation, graphic art, publishing and writing.

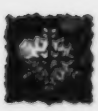
In the Yukon, the industry started with the introduction of the Internet five years ago and has only developed as a clearly identifiable industry since 1996. Even so, it is rapidly spreading throughout the Yukon. Latest figures from 1997 show the industry generates between $1 and $1.5 million per year in the territory and that continues to grow.

As elsewhere, new media technology in the Yukon is very competitive. There are about seven major players here, plus several Internet service providers. However, new media projects involve many more people from other sectors, including writers, editors, sound technicians, musicians, composers, video operators and actors.

Yukon companies can now compete internationally and do. They are doing work across Canada, the United States and Britain. Both First Nations' and non-First Nations' organizations and people are involved in the industry. The information highway is not restricted by the boundaries that other cultural industries in the Yukon face such as proximity to market, although higher communication costs in the North are an issue with the industry.

The future for Yukon new media looks bright. The Yukon telecommunications infrastructure is in the process of being enhanced to provide the network capabilities that will give new media artists the ability to create and display their digital products from any community in the territory. All of the Yukon's communities will have high-speed digital access which will provide rural artisans with networking capability for all manner of web-based graphics, video, animated art and music.

Additionally, the creation of the new Multimedia Facility at Yukon College will provide Yukon people with the



opportunity to learn the many aspects of digital creativity so they may pursue a career in the new media arts.

High capital costs are another issue for the new media industry. Because technology is changing so rapidly, there's constantly a need to replace obsolete equipment and supplies. Finding the money to do that is sometimes a hardship.

The industry is also concerned about the cost of telephone service, which is two-and-a-half times more than the average cost in southern Canada. And there's a need for more training in both marketing and technical knowledge.

Recommendations from new media production industry

- **Continue to improve Internet connections.**
- **Provide educational opportunities and training assistance to encourage skill development, particularly in the area of marketing.**
- **Simplify tendering and contract practices.**
- **Provide economic growth initiatives, such as tax incentives, to support the industry.**

Book and Periodical Publishing

*In 1998, **Peter Steele** won an international award, the Boardeman Tasker Prize for Mountain Literature, for his book "Eric Shipton: Everest and Beyond." He was also a finalist in the Banff Book Festival for the same book. The previous year, **Ken Madsen** was a finalist in the Banff Festival for his book "Wild Rivers, Wild Lands."*

*The **Society Advancing Yukon Culture & Communications** (SAYCC) publishes a periodical called "Our Home," focussing on First Nations culture and issues.*

***Barb Dunlop** is a winner of the International Golden Heart Award for Best Short Contemporary Romance Manuscript, for her novel "After the Kiss."*

***Flo Whyard** has been publishing historical and children's works for more than 30 years. **Jim Robb** is another of the Yukon's long time publishers, with his "Colourful Five Percent" books.*

*"The Northern Review," which began publishing in 1988, is the North's first academic journal and has subscriptions in the United States, Europe and Australia. Another scholarly publication that has international distribution is "The Canadian Journal of Environmental Education," edited by **Bob Jickling**.*

*"Staging the North" is a collection of northern plays edited by, among others, **Eve D'Aeth** of Whitehorse. The book contains works by **Philip Adams, Sharon Shorty**, and a play co-written by **Patti Flather** and **Leonard Linklater**. This play, entitled "60 Below," was nominated for seven Dora and Mavor Moore awards in the small theatre division after a spring 1997 run by Native Earth in Toronto.*

*In 1997, **Patricia Robertson** was named a finalist in the George Woodcock Poetry Contest for her poem "Inukshuk."*

*There is no duty on exports to the United States. In fact, exports to Alaska comprise a significant percentage of the business of **Wolf Creek Books**.*

Publishing in the Yukon has been around since the Gold Rush. However, in the last ten years there has been a big change in the industry — in large part because of the introduction of computers and desktop publishing technology. In 1991, the industry received a boost when Lost Moose Publishing emerged as an important regional book publisher. Today, there are at least four fully developed local book publishers and more than a dozen individuals or businesses that have published a book in the last five years. This industry provides work for at least 40 Yukon people and involves writing, editing, production, design work, marketing and distribution.

Non-fiction writing is the genre that has flourished most strongly in the Yukon. The two main newspapers in the territory, local magazines such as the Yukon Reader and The Northern Journal, and the Lost Moose catalogues have all provided a forum for non-fiction (and occasional poetry and fiction). Fiction has been slower to develop here partly because of our geographic distance from a broader literary community.

This is changing, however, with the help of such things as the Writer-in-Residence program, which pays for visiting writers to give workshops and manuscript consultations to Yukoners, and university level creative writing courses being offered at Yukon College.

Northern writers are producing a personal and unique product that is in some cases being recognized nationally. Because of a growing interest in the North worldwide, there's potential for a strong market for northern books outside the territory. There's also significant local support for Yukon-written and published material. Both residents and tourists seem interested in buying books about the Yukon by Yukoners. Eighty percent of Lost Moose's publications are sold in the territory.

At this point, revenues from book and magazine publishing are still relatively modest. Yukon Business Survey information from 1997 indicates the territory's publishing industry brings in less than $1 million a year. There are few Yukon people making their principle income from publishing.

Part of the problem is that high shipping and duty costs make it hard to compete in export markets. The advent of the

Internet, however, is giving Yukon publishers the opportunity to offer on-line book ordering services. This is helping with the distribution and sales of their products. Technological advancements mean that geographic proximity to the market is not necessarily key to being competitive in the industry.

Publishing is a risky and expensive undertaking. There are concerns in Canada as a whole about the fragility of the industry, especially because of competition with the mass U.S. market. People who work in the industry locally also say that in order to compete, they need more training in virtually every aspect of the publishing sector, from marketing and promotion to technical and communication skills.

Recommendations from the book and periodical publishing industry

- **Support all aspects of publishing through training, product development and marketing.**
- **Liaise with national funding agencies to provide relevant funding information.**
- **Support locally-published materials in promotions, gifts and tourism material.**
- **Develop a publishing program to create a level playing field for Yukon publishers. With the right infrastructure support, there is plenty of opportunity for a healthy publishing industry in the Yukon.**

Visual Arts and Crafts

***Ann Smith**'s ravenstail weavings are in high demand in Canada and the United States. She and visual artist **Eugene Alfred** participated in an art exhibition in Zurich, Switzerland. As a result, they made contacts and acquired some European commissions.*

*The art of such world class craftspeople as carver **Keith Wolfe Smarch** and folk artist **Lynne Blaikie** is being distributed in North America, Europe and Asia.*

*In 1996 a book entitled "Quiltworks Across Canada" was published which features a story on **Janet Moore** and [former Yukoner] **Pat White**. **Carol Pettigrew** is another Yukon artist included in the book.*

*The work of printmaker and papermaker **Joyce Majiski** appears in several collections, including the Walter Phillips Permanent Collection at the Banff Centre for the Arts, the Canada Council Art Bank and corporate and state collections in Washington.*

***Vernon Asp** has attended Rendezvous Canada, this country's premiere world travel trade show, as a visual artist representing the Yukon. He acquired some commissions as a result of this contact.*

The visual arts and crafts sector is the largest and oldest cultural industry in the Yukon and one of the few cultural sectors active in communities outside of Whitehorse.

Visual arts and crafts have been an integral part of our culture for centuries. In recent times, authentic traditional items produced by First Nations people have become a valuable commodity. Non-traditional works of art such as pottery, weaving and painting, produced by both First Nations and non-First Nations artists, have also become very popular in the Yukon's market and beyond. In fact, internationally, there's more interest in Yukon original arts and crafts than ever before. Many visitors to the Yukon are familiar with the work of some local artists even before travelling to the territory, and seek out local galleries specifically to purchase pieces by these Yukon artisans.

Along with the fine art that is sold to collectors and museums, there is a flourishing small business or home-based crafts industry, offering everything from willow furniture to jewelry. There is one home-based business that produces needlepoint kits that are available throughout Canada. Annual events such as the Sprucebog and Cranberry craft fairs are very popular and well attended, and give artists and craftspeople an excellent opportunity to promote and sell their work.

One major constraint related to marketing our arts and crafts outside the territory is that the product is sometimes similar to that made in southern Canada. For example, Tlingit style masks are produced in B.C. as well as in the Yukon and pottery is made throughout Canada. Our local product must show some uniquely Yukon elements for it to stand out among the rest. This is a problem with selling goods inside the Yukon as well as outside. Some local retailers stock imported crafts, which makes it harder for Yukon artists to sell their work. Added to this is the fact that production and shipping costs are high here. Art materials must often be imported from southern Canada. The shipping costs result in a higher price for the final product.

A problem, particularly for First Nations artists, is the limited space available to sell their work. Most of the

venues that sold First Nations art, including Northern Images, Yukon Native Products, and the Northern store, are no longer operating. As well, some First Nations artists are not accustomed to or comfortable with using the retail system to sell their work. They prefer to deal directly with their clients.

Recommendations from the visual arts and crafts industry

- **Provide professional development training courses and affordable apprenticeship programs.**
- **Support the local market instead of going to outside suppliers.**
- **Support the development of a Yukon art festival.**
- **Support marketing.**
- **Develop a comprehensive visual arts strategy to address training, more interaction between retailers and producers, options for co-operative efforts in wholesale efforts, buying raw materials, and marketing.**

Cultural Non-government Organizations

Nakai Theatre** has developed and produced numerous plays that have subsequently toured the country at fringe festivals. They include **Cristina Pekarik's** "Cloudberry," and "The Fasting Girl" by **Miche Genest.

***The Dawson City Art Society** has received money and support to renovate the Oddfellows Hall in Dawson as a multi-use arts space. There are plans for an art school offering courses at every level in theatre, dance, visual arts and music.*

***The Northern Fibres Guild** is taking a major step towards visual art export of its Cranberry Fair products. It plans to expand on the success of the Fair by marketing artists' products collectively on a year-round basis to a wider audience. It has received money from the Yukon government to produce a brochure to showcase the work of its artists.*

*The Yukon's music festivals provide an important function in promoting local talent. **The Frostbite Music Festival** is going even further by sponsoring songwriting workshops for Yukon musicians.*

***Janet Moore**, the former owner and operator of The Studio Gallery, spearheaded the formation of the Studio Gallery Association, which is a group of artists who organize group shows. It has active members in Atlin, B.C. as well as in the Yukon.*

There are more than 50 cultural non-government organizations (NGOs) in the Yukon. These include, music and storytelling festivals, visual and performing arts groups, the Yukon Arts Centre, the Society of Yukon Artists of Native Ancestry (SYANA) and l'Association franco-yukonnaise, just to mention a few. Each of these organizations plays a key role in preserving and promoting art and culture. They also perform the job of disseminating art and bringing people together to enjoy and benefit from it.

The Yukon government recognizes what an essential job these groups do in terms of making the territory a vibrant place to live and work. The government, with assistance from the Yukon Lottery Commission, supports their work with operating money. This year, in one program alone, more than $350,000 went to 15 of the arts organizations. These 15 annually stage more than 300 events or performances, attract more than 53,000 people and generate more than $2.2 million. They also provide full or part-time work for about 250 Yukon people.

These groups could not function if it weren't for the hundreds of volunteers who give of their time. Of the 15 NGOs that received government funding in 1999, they are supported by 1,800 volunteers who contribute about 46,000 hours to the groups' activities each year.

All these groups are non-profit. They're not directly involved in commercial activities other than some product sales (museum gift shops) and facility rentals (the Yukon Arts Centre). While these organizations would like the opportunity to develop commercial ventures and argue they have the expertise and facilities to do so, the business community is concerned about unfair competition. The Yukon government must walk a fine line in terms of providing public money to help NGOs but doing it in a way that doesn't create an unfair playing field. The Yukon government's role is to support NGOs in their work of providing training and promotion for artists, production opportunities, and opportunities for bringing art and audiences together.

Recommendations from cultural non-government organizations

- **Support and assist in developing co-operatives and other venues for First Nations art.**
- **Assist in all aspects of training, including business and marketing.**
- **Provide capital funding to upgrade technology and expand facilities.**

Cultural Industries Implementation Plan

In 1997, the Yukon government undertook a major consultation process with people involved in the territory's cultural industries. The government received a wide range of suggestions from almost 40 groups and individuals that took part in the process.

The government recognized the urgency of acting on some of the recommendations and therefore has already done so. Those measures are reflected in this multi-year plan, along with steps that the government plans to take in the near future. It's important to note that in many cases, the Yukon government has supported cultural industries through non-arts specific funds such as the Community Development Fund or the Millennium Fund.

OBJECTIVES OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The overall goal of the Cultural Industries Implementation Plan is to help cultural industries in the territory develop in a vibrant, sustainable and competitive way. This involves supporting:

- substantial employment options and opportunities for Yukon people in the various cultural industries sectors;
- stronger partnerships within cultural industries and between cultural industries and government;
- access to the financing, training, skills, support programs, infrastructure and markets necessary for individuals to grow and develop; and
- industry development which provides opportunities for Yukon artists to make a living by creating, marketing and selling their products from the Yukon.

PRINCIPLES

The principles underlying the Cultural Industries Implementation Plan are:

- that recognition of the cultural industries sector is a vital component of Yukon society which contributes to the Yukon economy and deserving of government support on the same basis as other sectors;
- that members of the cultural industry are best suited to make decisions on specific projects through representative boards and committees;
- that strengthening partnerships within the sector is necessary to help determine priorities and to form the basis for a sustainable cultural industry;
- that the Yukon market is limited and cultural industries need export markets to grow and provide a broader range of opportunities;
- that government support should build on strengths in the cultural industries. This should be done by supporting the priorities identified by the industry and by providing the help that would allow artists and firms to compete with artists and businesses from other jurisdictions; and
- that the cultural industries sector encompasses a diverse range of activities that need flexible and targeted assistance programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CONSULTATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Training

Representatives from all the cultural industries — books, film, video, new media, sound recording and visual arts — emphasized the need for better training, particularly in the areas of marketing and business management. Representatives from the film and visual arts sectors also called for production training.

Actions

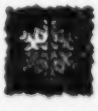
- Stemming from the consultations, the Yukon government agreed to establish a Cultural Industries Training Trust Fund. This fund had a budget of $200,000 to be paid out over two fiscal years. It provides money for labour market related training. A training committee decides which groups or individuals will receive funding for specific projects. The committee includes representatives from various cultural industries.
- The Yukon government will work with educational institutions to ensure that appropriate basic arts business and management training is available for members of the cultural industry. Where existing courses are not sufficient, the Arts Branch will work with educational partners to develop a pilot introductory course that would complement existing courses.
- The Recording Arts Industry Yukon Association recently organized workshops for their members on international marketing, distribution and use of the Internet. Where industry groups identify a need and take the initiative, the Yukon government will work with these groups to develop export plans and to organize workshops on marketing skills.

Financial incentives and access to capital

Participants in the consultations indicated that access to capital and insufficient financial incentives have been a barrier to expansion for many sectors in the cultural industry.

Visual artists and musicians often need small amounts of money for supplies and to get started in business. New media companies asked that venture capital financing and tax incentives be more readily available. Publishers called for subsidies and project specific funding. They also pointed to the success of tax breaks for authors in places like Ireland. Members of the sound recording industry said they need better access to financing for product development, marketing, promotion, and travel.

Financial and tax incentives for the film industry in other jurisdictions are very generous. Participants from the industry emphasized that if the Yukon is going to compete, the government would have to offer similar incentives to attract productions, assist in the development of new films, and to subsidize the costs of training.



Actions

To address the many concerns raised about the need for better access to financing, a number of different initiatives have been taken. These include:

- The Yukon Film Incentive Program, which was announced in November 1998. It is designed to increase the benefits to Yukon businesses and labour from film shoots in the territory. The three-year program includes three components: a Yukon Film Location Incentive, a Yukon Film Training Initiative, and a Yukon Filmmakers Fund. These programs provide a travel rebate, a wage rebate for eligible Yukon labour, subsidies for training, and a film development fund to support Yukon filmmakers.
- Venture Capital: Access to venture capital will increase due to the creation of the Yukon Government Fund, the Small Business Investment Tax Credit, and the proposed Fireweed Fund, a Venture Capital Corporation sponsored by the Yukon Federation of Labour.
- A number of Tax Reform measures were announced in the 1999/2000 budget after a series of roundtables.

Expanding markets

During the consultation process, groups from all sectors of the cultural industry talked about the fact that the Yukon's domestic market is limited. The groups pointed out that in order to survive, there's a need to develop both the tourist and export markets.

Several of the industries said one of the barriers in developing new export markets is the high cost of travel to industry marketing events and tradeshows. High shipping costs were also identified as a problem. The main priority identified by visual arts and crafts representatives was the need to market their products within the Yukon in particular.

Actions

- The Department of Economic Development has provided support for Recording Arts Industry Yukon Association members to attend industry tradeshows. Members of the publishing industry were also involved in a government-sponsored trade mission to Alaska. As a result, there have been new export opportunities for a number of Yukon artists.
- There's now a site on the Internet called Discover Yukon that gives artists and arts groups the opportunity to sell prints, original art and music CDs on-line. The Trade and Investment Fund provided almost $49,000 to market Discover Yukon in major tourism industry trade publications.
- The government's Arts Branch has established its own web page on the Internet. The site includes information on funding applications, a listing of community groups and contacts, links to artists' web pages and a virtual gallery.
- The Arts Branch will work with local artists, gallery owners and other stakeholders to find more venues for artists to sell their products and to explore options for better promoting Yukon art locally.
- The Yukon government is committed to continuing its "Created in the Yukon" program as a way of raising awareness of and promoting visual, literary and performing arts products created and sold in the territory.

Better infrastructure

During the consultations, the new media industry was concerned about the slow Internet connections in the Yukon compared with southern Canada. That, coupled with relatively high telephone rates, were hindrances to competing nationally and internationally.

Actions

The Yukon Government is improving Internet capabilities for the rural communities with the Connect Yukon program. Working with NorthwesTel, the Yukon government is investing capital funds to improve the territory's telecommunications infrastructure so that high-speed Internet will be available in the Yukon's 15 primary communities. The Connect Yukon program is also helping to extend basic telephone and Internet services to presently unserved areas of the Yukon.

- Since the consultations, the Yukon government has partnered with NorthwesTel and local Internet Service Providers to bring a T-3 line to Whitehorse. This has significantly increased Internet capacity.
- The Yukon government is providing communities with improved access to the Internet by tapping into Industry Canada's Community Access Program. The territorial government will continue working to access more federal funding for telecommunications and Internet infrastructure development.

In early 2000, the Yukon government made a strategic investment in the Yukon's film industry. A Contribution Agreement of $150,000 was made to the Yukon's Northern Film and Video Industry Association to provide funding for the purchase of a grip

package, along with related training. The equipment will be rented to productions, providing revenue to the association while attracting productions by offering a cost savings. One portion of the revenue will be used for operation and maintenance on the equipment. The remaining portion will be placed into a training fund, allowing the association to take advantage of the mushrooming growth of the film industry and economic opportunities being enjoyed elsewhere in Canada. This anticipated growth, made possible by this government investment, may also stimulate private investment in other film-related equipment. The equipment will be made available to Yukon filmmakers when it is not being used on visiting productions. Independent Yukon productions will enjoy a reduced rental rate on the equipment.

Research and development and product development

The cultural industry has identified a need for research and development money for new products and for projects that have the potential to break ground in opening new markets for Yukon businesses, particularly in the area of new media.

Actions

- As a result, the Department of Government Services has committed $275,000 in seed funding for a Technology Innovation Centre to be based at Yukon College. The centre is designed to support applications using new technology, including multi-media and advanced Internet based programs.
- In partnership with Yukon College, NorthwesTel and other private sector firms, the Yukon government is establishing a multimedia facility at Yukon College's Whitehorse campus. This facility will provide training for new media artists to acquire the skills needed to work in the multimedia field.

Improved partnerships

Cultural industries are economically interrelated in the Yukon. Together they also play an integral role in supporting other economic sectors such as retail sales and tourism. Over the course of the consultations, cultural industry groups talked of the need for their activities to be more highly recognized as important sectors of the Yukon's economy.

The music sector asked that the Yukon government support the creation of a sound recording industry association.

The book publishing sector asked for help in accessing federal funding.

Several of the sectors expressed a desire for government to better understand the needs and challenges of cultural industries. Industry representatives of the video, new media and visual arts sectors, for example, expressed concern about the Yukon government's contracting practices. They felt too much detailed information is required for tenders, which makes the process time consuming.

Actions

- In conjunction with the Yukon government's "Escape Red Tape" initiative, the Department of Government Services will examine ways to make tendering provisions less onerous for businesses, including those in the cultural industry sectors.
- The Yukon government's financial support for the territory's recently formed music industry association (RAIYA) is one example of its commitment to working in partnership with groups to strengthen cultural industries. The government will continue looking for opportunities to build partnerships with the cultural industry.
- The Yukon government has committed to working with Yukon College to set up a technology innovation centre. It will join with other groups in offering various training programs.
- The Yukon government has provided money to the Dawson City Arts Society to renovate a multi-use building. This project has received much community support as well, including financial help from the municipality. It involves groups from several sectors, including wilderness tourism and a wide range of arts disciplines.
- The Yukon government supports the notion of film industry representatives working with various groups to organize an annual Film Festival that would allow local filmmakers to show their work.
- A Cultural Industries Co-operation Agreement would provide a new source of money to help the Yukon's cultural industry develop. The Yukon government will pursue negotiations with the Department of Canadian Heritage towards this end. This is consistent with the Yukon government's efforts to broaden its relationship with federal departments other than DIAND and to make gains in relation to federal programming funds available to the territory.

MONITORING PROGRESS

It's important to both government and the cultural industry that the plans laid out in this paper are acted upon. To make sure this happens, the government will prepare a progress report, which will include statistics, in three years time...by the end of 2002.